

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 10. (cancelled)

11. (new) A linking element for a spinal fixation system designed to link at least two implantable connecting assemblies, wherein said element comprises at least partly of a support made of polymer material and of a rod, curved or not, substantially coaxial with said support.

12. (new) The linking element as claimed in claim 11, wherein said support has a substantially tubular or cylindrical shape.

13. (new) The linking element according to claim 11, further comprising a helical spring having an axis substantially parallel with an axis of said support and turns, said turns being at least partly embedded in said support.

14. (new) The linking element as claimed in claim 13, wherein said rod is substantially coaxial with said spring.

15. (new) The linking element as claimed in claim 13, wherein said rod has an external diameter smaller than an internal diameter of said turns.

16. (new) The linking element as claimed in claim 11, wherein said element further comprises a straight or curved stiffening element.

17. (new) The linking element as claimed in claim 16, wherein said stiffening element is composed of a sheet of material with a substantially U-shaped cross section.

18. (new) A spinal fixation system comprising at least two implantable connecting assemblies linked by at least one linking element, said at least one linking element comprising at least partly of a support made of polymer material and of a rod, curved or not, substantially coaxial with said support.

19. (new) The spinal fixation system as claimed in claim 18, further comprising a stiffening element fixed at least to the two implantable connecting assemblies.

20. (new) The spinal fixation system as claimed in claim 18, further comprising at least one rigid linking element.